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ABSTRACT

The knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for an administrator, who is an evaluation layman, to design an educational evaluation system are presented. Five aspects of an evaluation project are investigated: (1) the need for sound, clearly articulated, and current research to serve as a framework for evaluation; (2) the essential features of a good evaluation; (3) a description of program development or the ways to modify and manage a project more efficiently; (4) the refinement of fiscal procedures to insure fiscal accountability; (5) alternatives for furthering the development of the project and obtaining the funds to do it. Three pretests and three posttests are included in the document to measure the reader's attitude change and reaction to the kind of evaluation system proposed. (MLP)

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TITLE

An Educational Evaluation System That Doesn't Need Hyper-Specialist

AUTHOR

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SUBTITLE

RESEARCH ("What do you do? Why?"),

EVALUATION ("How do you know when you've succeeded?"),

DEVELOPMENT ("How many alternate paths will get you there?"),

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY ("How do the costs compare with the results?")

and

RECYCLING ("How should we do it next time around?").

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INTRODUCTION

THE AUDIENCE FOR THIS DOCUMENT

THINGS YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO WITH THIS DOCUMENT

R, E, D, FA, and R -- FOR WHOM?

Historically, this document has evolved from a series of short half-hour presentation to program and project managers. The purpose these meetings was to adapt the latest research and evaluation data to the needs of administrators who wanted to "put their money where their problems are."

Over a period of time, this publication has grown larger in size and in scope. It is now ready to stand on its own.

In order to see if this document fits your needs, you might find it interesting and profitable to look over the next two sections.

The first section gives an analysis of the "things you might be able to do with this document." Goals and objectives are analyzed in three domains : the cognitive domain (knowledge, insights, and generalizations), the psychomotor domain (skills, things to do, peformances), and the affective domain (attitudes, values, and inter-personal skills). The ranking gives some idea of which domain is stressed in each section.

The second section is much simpler. You answer a number of questions. Your score will tell you how applicable this material may be to you.

THINGS YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO

WITH THIS DOCUMENT

	GOAL ANALYSIS		
	INSIGHTS	SKILLS	ATTITUDE
Clearly explain the reasons behind research dollars you budget and expend.		2nd	1st
Be aware of "where the action is" in the sense that you utilize names and addresses of people who can "apply" your research.	1st	2nd	
Evaluate your project each day before going home for the evening meal.	2nd	3rd	1st
Tie the 5 C's together : Content (information)	1st	2nd	
must be individualized by Criticism (dialogue)		1st	2nd
which should be exteriorized by Creation		1st	2nd
in a process that is Continuous (on-going)		2nd	1st
and stresses the Context of asking "Why?"	2nd		1st
Develop a wide variety of viable alternatives that will effectively help attain the goals you have chosen for a particular program.	2nd		1st
Change over from your own solutions whenever you find that someone else has come up with something that works better.	1st	3rd	2nd
Stress fiscal accountability in the sense that you can give accurate estimates of what each of several alternatives will cost in money, time, and resources.	2nd	1st	3rd
Make decisions based upon a number of pre-specified considerations.	1st	2nd	
Recycle your programs in such a way as to make them financially and humanly self-supporting.	2nd	3rd	1st
Transplant programs initiated by you in such a way that less specialized professionals can carry these projects on with a maximum of productivity and a minimum of difficulty.	1st	2nd	3rd
Realize that even with all your expertise and successful experience that you don't know exactly what to do in a variety of unforeseeable and foreseeable circumstances.	2nd		1st

R, E, D, FA, and R--For Whom?

The above alphabet soup (R, E, D, FA, and R) is an attempt to capsulize the unbelievably long title of this short paper. R stands for Research. E stands for Evaluation. D stands for Development. FA stands for Fiscal Accountability. R stands for Recycling.

The following ideas are meant for you if you are interested by this title (in spite of its length) and if you can answer yes to both section A and B for at least three of the following questions:

Question 1: Research Journals

A. Do you find that many of the articles you read are too theoretical, too mathematical, and too technical?

B. Do you blame the author's lack of human awareness more than your own educational life style?

Question 2: Evaluation Reports

A. Do you tend to disagree with comparative strangers who tell you what a nice job you're doing educationally?

B. Do you find criticism hard to take unless someone tags on a few acceptable suggestions?

Question 3: Developmental Dilemmas

A. Do you feel dissatisfied with yourself when you can think of only one way to achieve a particular educational goal?

B. Have you ever voluntarily changed your solution because someone else suggested a better way?

Question 4: Cost and Accountability

A. Have you ever fought to get more money because an educational goal was more important to you than saving a few dollars?

B. Have you ever found a less expensive and more effective way to attain a particular educational goal?

Question 5: Refunding and Recycling

A. Have you ever brought an educational activity to the financial breakeven point where it became self-supporting?

B. Have you ever developed an educational activity to the point where someone else could take it over and do a better job?

Now that you've answered these questions, you should have a good idea of what to expect in the following pages. The rest is up to you if you feel you want to keep on reading. It is hoped that the thoughts hereafter shared with you will eventually get you doing more than read about how ideas can change education for the better.

Even when you have a lot to say, talking <u>to</u> people instead of <u>at</u> them is a preferable way to make your point. In brief, this document wants to help you stress feedback over one-way information transmission. In this way, your human tendency to compete will be humanized by adding your humane tendency to cooperate. Sharing experiences is a good way to learn as long as you don't assume that "circumstances are parallel."

RESEARCH

("What do you do? Why?)

Side One -- The Evaluation of Research

What Is a Good Piece of Research?

Two Goals of Basic Research

Two Goals of Applied Research

Four Milestones on the Rough Road of Research

The Trend in Research Formulae

What Does the Researcher Do?

The Educational Researcher

The Full-Time Educational Researcher

What Is a Good Piece of Research?

A good piece of research is one that is to the point and up-to-date. A good piece of basic research is not always a good piece of applied research. Research that is "to the point" is a combination of clarity and communication: this is the essence of basic research. Research that is "up-to-date" is a combination of committee (more than one mastermind) and channels (more than the theoretically possible): this is the essence of applied research.

The following sections will develop these themes.

TWO GOALS OF BASIC RESEARCH

What Research Stresses	Why	This Means Less Emphasis on
CLARITY	Stress accountability to voters and taxpayers.	Technical Terminology
COMMUNICATION	Avoid duplication and "reinventing the wheel."	Printed Book

Implementing these two goals can take a number of approaches. Current clarity issues stress such concepts as performance objectives, behavioral objectives, criterion-referenced evaluation in place of norm-referenced evaluation, curriculum modules, self-evaluation, and accountability. If two or more of these terms are unfamiliar to you, it would be a good idea to look them up in Educational Index, ERIC, and other retrieval sources. If Educational Index and ERIC are unfamiliar to you, ask your librarian. The responses to your questions will introduce you to a whole world of ideas that can help you in your daily work. This is a key task of research.

Communication issues stress such concepts as feedback, process awareness, shoptalk, brainstorming, idea exchanges, the search for alternatives, and microfiche technology. All of these terms boil down to a specific way or technique to tell others what has worked for you and how well it has worked. Even talking about difficulties is a valid function of communication in research.

TWO GOALS OF APPLIED RESEARCH

What Research Stresses	Why	This Means Less Emphasis on
COOPERATION	Develop teamwork as the way to tie a lot of brainpower together	The lowly research legmen working under only one mastermind.
COST AWARENESS	Do the best job possible with the available resources	This is what we want no matter how much it will cost you the candidate for a degree.

Implementing these two goals demands the ability to translate basic research into everyday language and the skill to interact with existing educational patterns. Some experts have written in such a way that few others can understand them. They seem to have found all the difficult words in the dictionary. When this became too obvious, they seem to have created jaw-breaking terms that defy common equivalents. Much of this had been in the name of "bringing order to one's subject." These experts need to be interpreted.

Other experts resemble jackpot winners who seem to advocate going on a spending spree in a utopia where anything goes. They seem unaware that, in a given situation, not every teacher can do everything he would like to do nor get everything he asks for from the local educational authorities. These experts need to be retooled into economy compact models which will get the educator where he wants to go.

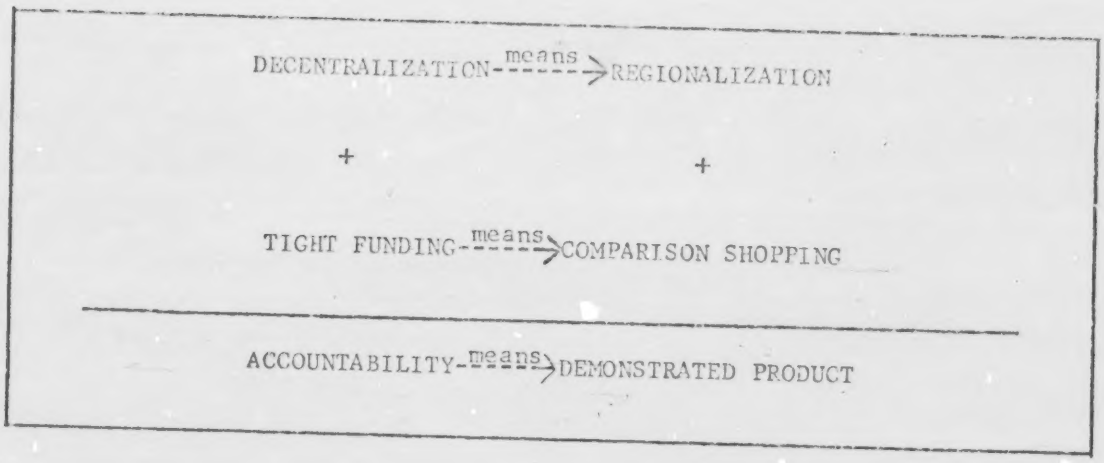
For many practitioners, doing is a way of thinking and planning in terms of the pragmatic human condition. One does the best one can. Activities have a way of accommodating their scope to the available resources and personnel. Next time around, things will be better.

FOUR MILESTONES ON THE ROUGH ROAD OF RESEARCH

Milestone	Its Difficulty	Its Value
Committee	Time Give-and-take Hidden Agendas	Negotiation Political Expertise
Channels	Hierarchy Paperwork Routine	Pre-planning Expert Opinion Legality
Challenge	Unknown Territory Anxiety Uncertainty	Top Capacity Functioning on One's Own Self-Acutalization
Coordination	Thousands of Unrelated Pieces Legal Checks and Counterchecks	Teamwork with Others Amalgam of Many Kinds of Brainpower

Committee work keeps one aware of one's equals. Going through channels keeps one aware of one's superiors and of one's limitations. Facing up to challenges keeps one aware of one's grow-power. Coordinating a million and one simultaneous events and details keeps one aware of how much work it takes to get even a small piece of research going. Keeping it going is another milestone itself. This is why one can unwittingly forget imagination and creativity when there is so much else to do.

THE TREND IN RESEARCH FORMULAE



This formula means that people who can produce results are more likely to be funded than those who have not demonstrated specific products. "Hard data" is one way to describe success. This information obviously includes numbers and statistics. On a more humanistic level, anecdotal data is also necessary to "get the feel" of a particular program. Someone who has built up the power and momentum to solve problems needs more economic fuel, not less. Pouring money into these centers of success is comparable to betting on a sure thing. It's not a gamble. It's an investment.

People will support research which is clearly visible and promises a worthwhile return for the personnel, time, and money invested. Glittering generalities and technical jargon need to be blue-penciled out to attain clarity. Relevance and response to local needs are universally acceptable as proof of valuable research products.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCHER DO?

Walk up to a typical researcher and ask him, "What do you do?" He will smile condescendingly and answer, "Research." In his smile, you can almost feel that he has no idea that the word "Research" conveys only a vague meaning to you. Chances are that if you are his wife, son, or daughter, you will know that he works a lot with statistics, goes to many conferences and conventions, writes articles for periodicals (he never says "magazines"), travels hither and yon to consult, gives lectures and works constantly on his new book. But, deep down inside, you never know what he writes about, lectures about, consults about, or talks about. Once in a while, you learn a title or two, but when you try to read them or repeat them, it all of a sudden dawns upon you that the researcher, even when your next door neighbor, is a total and mysterious stranger. It's frustrating to see someone every day and to have no idea of what he does, thinks, and feels as he works on his speciality.

Even this preamble is too long. It seems to hint that the researcher is in a world apart. Specifically, it doesn't answer the question, "Exactly what does a researcher do?"

People who have to ask this question are embarrassed not to know the answer. After all, it all seems so obvious that everyone should know what "research" is. When pushed to the wall to answer this question, the researcher himself doesn't blush but he can get angry or even impatient. He asks himself, "Am I being questioned or badgered? Doesn't my questioner realize how important my work is?"

Try it. Ask a researcher what he does. Watch how painfully he winces as you ask, "Why do you do research?" If you try it, he won't like it.

THE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER

Some dry witted humorist once said that about ninety percent of research consists in not knowing where one is going. When you know where you're going, it's no longer research, it's development.

This isn't always true. The medical researcher is trying to find remedies for maladies that are presently incurable. The engineering researcher tries to come up with new technology. The basic researcher tries to come up with ideas that someday will be practical even though they are today quite abstract and nebulous. The social researcher takes surveys and tries to identify significant trends in politics or sociology. The question still remains, "What does the educational researcher do?"

Perhaps a better question to ask would be, "Who does educational research?" This answer is easy to specify. Most graduate students in education are required to take a course in educational research. Teachers, counselors, administrators, and statisticians all undertake educational research. These educators conduct research to solve practical and annoying problems. Annoying here is synonymous with urgent. Graduate students conduct research to advance the cause of scholarship. This scholarship is often synonymous with the reception of a master's or doctor's degree. This badge of scholarship facilitates entry into higher paying jobs. It can take on many aspects of the blue collar worker's union card.

There are many other ways to make money through research. Consulting professors provide one example of part-time employment in this domain. It can obviously be difficult for a beginner to decide whether the consulting or the teaching is the part-time job. There are faster ways to make

money in educational research. One can write books for education students to buy. An easy way to write enough for a book is to start with articles for educational periodicals and reviews. Starting with one's ideas and techniques is a good place to begin since one can always write sympathetically and well of anything one considers to be a worthy subject. Many charismatic orators have tried their hands at recording sessions. With the right contact, they have been able to spread their ideas throughout the widening market of voice cassettes. A monotone and unenthusiastic voice is something to be avoided here at all costs. Listeners and inquirers want answers that inform, inspire, and improve them.

The present author takes the position that there is no one definitive answer to the question, "What does the educational researcher do?" The table on the next page gives a few of the many tasks involved in full time educational research.

This list can be updated indefinitely. Here are a few of the many possible subtitles that could be added :

1. Effective delivery systems
2. Program planning for special groups and special goals
3. Effective techniques that have been proven to work
4. Essential procedures that are easy to transport
5. Intervention strategies and coping behaviors
6. Choices vs. forces in career education
7. Packages designed for implementation without special training

The next page stresses <u>targets</u> (goals, objectives, purposes), <u>tests</u> (evaluation, exams, measurement), and <u>technology</u> (resources, media, packages).

THE FULL-TIME EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER

Full-time educational researchers specialize in a number of specific and general functions. Here are some of them:

Specialty	Respond to
Information Feedback (Specific Objectives)	Written and telephone inquiries for data and clarification
Research Dissemination (General Objectives)	Needs of practitioners to communicate with one another
Formative Evaluation (Specific Evaluation)	Necessity for ongoing research to be monitored and improved by a committee rather than only one mastermind
Program Management (General Evaluation)	Laws and regulations that are necessary to finance, administer, supervise, and coordinate statewide and nationwise project
Diagnostic Action (Specific Resources)	Teachers and schools in search of specific solutions to very unique problems
Technological Advance (General Resources)	Trend to develop resources and hardware that will multiply the educational effects of each man hour

EVALUATION

("How do you know when you've succeeded?")

Side Two -- The Research of Evaluation

What Is a Good Evaluation?

What Is a Reasonably Priced Evaluation?

A Miscellany of Fiscal Aspects of Evaluation

Zero Growth Budget Hits Administration

Unspent Allocations

Anticipating Bottlenecks and Paperwork

Awareness of Needs and of Better Service

Administrators Must Be Justified Yearly

Anxiety over Refunding

Grantsmanship Is Not Enough

Academic Scholarship Is Not Enough

Built-in Vs. Patched on Evaluation

Accountability and Evaluation

Side Two

The Research of Evaluation

What is a Good Evaluation?

A good evaluation is one that is informative and one that will sell itself. An informative evaluation is one that stresses clarity and communication. An evaluation that sells itself is one that is obviously worth the dollars it costs. "Obviously" stresses the necessity to avoid terminology and considerations that can be grasped only by the expert and the specialist.

In a tight economy, a tight budget can be compared to a diet. A diet can be measured in two ways: (1) calories and weight reduction as measured by a scale and (2) nutrition and balanced eating habits. Is a diet (or a tight budget) healthy? It all depends upon how you evaluate it. Less calories will automatically lead to a weight loss. To achieve improved health, other considerations are necessary. Better instruction and better learning do not result from less money; they are the product of planning with a clear sense of priority. Priority means that some activities are more important than others.

An attorney prepares a trial by examining both sides of the case, the pro's and con's. A good evaluation must be aware of all sides of a program, the apparent successes and the possible sources of criticism. The success should be publicized. The lack of success in specific areas should be placed in perspective rather than be left unaccounted for. Unexplained minor faults can easily be distorted out of proportion.

What Is a Reasonably Priced Evaluation?

Evaluation consumes time, money, and resources. The total amount consumed is not the sole evaluative criterion to answer the inquiry, "How well did you evaluate?" Evaluation tries to do two things: (1) come up with a gross measure of success and (2) analyze each activity to pinpoint assets and deficits under the existing set-up. Gross measures of success help administrators plan for major adjustments and realignments. Such overall evaluations can be linked to specific administrator decisions. Analysis of activities can do much to clearly identify what helps and what hinders the accomplishment of objectives. A strictly informal approach here would mean that chaos and incoherence would reign. An analysis of strengths and weaknesses helps develop accurate records and a sense of "business" accountability. Such evaluation can be done on a daily basis. Each component can be evaluated daily if the forms are simple and relevant. This facilitates a cost analysis that is up-to-date and understandable. In this way, each component activity and each worker can compare itself to a realistic "production quota." This will take a lot of work, but it's worth the effort. Overall awareness of what's going on will help pinpoint and eliminate duplication. This can lead to comprehensive planning that makes sense and that will generate dollars and cents.

Case studies don't impress hard nosed administrators. Anyone can come up with exceptional cases. Consistent, accurate, and readily available information shows people that money spent has given dollar value. Information retrieval is an effective tool in tracing the effects of dollars spent. People like to be able to know the cost of results.

Evaluation by a visiting professor writing a research paper is not as useful as the implementation of a system that organizes hard data. Much of this data will end up buried in tons of paper unless an administrator with clear priorities keeps the "books up to date" by insisting on periodically asking one simple question. This question is, "How are we doing today?"

Accountability demands that such an evaluation be reasonably priced. A reasonable price cannot always be pre-specified. The type of evaluation system that can "stand on its own feet" is one that is more likely to be funded regardless of the specific dollar cost. "Standing on its own feet" is synonymous with having objectives that make sense to the recipients and to the funding agency. Stressing clarity and relevance is the first step to showing how sensible a particular procedure may be.

There are other aspects to accountability. The following section examines a few of them from the administrator's point of view. He is the one responsible for: (1) getting a larger proportion of program money directly to learned and other participants; (2) making sure his program gets all the funds allocated to it; (3) anticipating red tape and typical bureaucratic hang-ups; (4) keeping on top of the situation no matter how great the pressures; (5) justifying new and existing personnel positions; (6) taking the pains necessary to get refunded; (7) going beyond peripheral details to stress professional concerns; and (8) providing a ready, fast, and accurate answer to "How are we doing?" no matter when and by whom it is asked. Let's take each of these fiscal concerns ONE at a time.

A MISCELLANY OF FISCAL ASPECTS OF EVALUATION

(1) Zero Growth Budget Hits Administration

In a zero growth budget, no increase of funds means reduction of spending somewhere. Normally, this reduction takes place in the area of administration. The more an individual is removed from the person-to-person activities of a program, the more this person is herein classified as an administrator. The question prompting this type of accountability is, "How is this money getting to the learners?" When program money must go through layer after layer of "administrators," the sources of funding can become dissatisfied. The administrator must anticipate this.

(2) Unspent Allocations

Overbudgeting occurs when an individual district or school goes beyond its budget. In general, ten per cent overbudgeting for one component will pass unnoticed if the overall budget does not exceed the total budget. A very common source of lost funds is the case of unspent allocations. Funders tend to generalize that unspent money is unecessary.

(3) Anticipating Bottlenecks and Paperwork

Priorities can be enhanced by submitting early budgets with an indication of rank of importance. Supplies and equipment can be anticipated in a variety of ways. In a large system, bottlenecks in such areas as purchase orders and requisitions are difficult but not impossible to resolve. Approvals and function number problems can be streamlined, but this takes a great deal of time, discussion, and pre-planning. Even having the paperwork done in advance is a great step forward. Experience over a period of time can help program budget writers anticipate which specific

budget items will be questioned. There are definite dates for when supplies and equipment must be in use (e.g., May 1) and when paid for (e.g. July 1 or August 30).

Unspent monies can lead to cutbacks in allocations and appropriations. The taxpayer simplifies this situation: "They were budgeted for 50 million. They only spent 39 million. Therefore they don't need that unspent 11 million." What really happened is often more complicated and "red taped." The burden of justification falls upon the project manager.

(4) Awareness of Needs and of Better Service

When one is buried in paper, it is hard to expedite things: one is not quite sure of "what really happened" or of "what is happening." Getting on top of the problem demands that the administrator assume a role of leadership. Leadership means developing teamwork to achieve agreed upon goals. Teamwork happens in front of others and behind the scenes.

(5) Administrators Must Be Justified Yearly

The renewal of administrative personnel requires yearly job descriptions and names. There is a non-exceedable maximum to the total amount of money any one individual can receive each year. When someone goes on the payroll, his job must be justified. If the new manpower is necessary, it is easy to support with practical and valid job functions.

(6) Anxiety over Refunding

Long-range funding would simplify things. In years of scarce funds, this does not happen automatically. All programs must be able to steer a clear course through a labyrinth of laws and regulations, all of which go into very specific details as part of the legally necessary system of checks and balances. Under such circumstances, one can be very sympathetic

to administrative difficulties. Such sympathy needs to be backed up with specific changes in procedures. A short processing time will be rendered useless if documents get hung-up in local red tape. One must be unrelenting to speed up a lethargic system.

(7) Grantsmanship Is Not Enough

Some wag has said that most evaluators are either professionals or operators. He defined a professional as someone who places scholarship above all else and an operator as someone who places prestige and dollar value of research above all else. Such a dichotomy is a bit too drastic to be applicable to flesh and blood evaluators who value scholarship, prestige, and money in various proportions. The worker is worth his wages; solid research costs money; a master craftsman deserves all the praise and recognition he can get. When any research motive gets out of hand, evaluations based upon such disequilibrium can resemble cancer more than balanced growth.

(8) Academic Scholarship Is Not Enough

Money and prestige are not the only motivations that can go askew. A scholarly publication or a research paper can be inspired by the noblest of academic aspirations and still miss the point. The point is that evaluation is not limited to "something someone does to someone else after the project being evaluated is all over." A practical evaluation answers the question, "How are we doing?" in such a way as to point out necessary corrections and at such times as are most appropriate to help practitioners. Abstract academic scholarship is not always to be judged by such pragmatic exigencies.

Built-in Vs. Patched on Evaluation

A built-in evaluation evaluates goals which are an integral part of the program. A patched on evaluation evaluates goals which are drawn up by an outsider after the program is in progress. The type of evaluation desirable is one that is an integral part of the program itself.

Evaluation concentrates on results. The hard fact is that the rule of "produce or else" is the standard of evaluation. This emphasis on success motivates program managers to monitor progress before the ultimate "fail-safe" condition. When a program, three or four months old, is not up to par, there is time, personnel, and resources enough to make the readjustments necessary to run a program better. A negative evaluation after one has closed shop is too late to do much good. The same verdict several months earlier would have motivated program changes that could have enhanced the overall effectiveness of goal attainment. This is especially important when large amounts of money are involved. Audits two or three years after the completion of a program serve definite and acceptable accounting purposes. Such audits do not provide the on-line evaluations necessary to achieve continual quality control.

A typical approach to training evaluators capable of such systematic management of on-going educational processes is to suggest graduate courses and graduate degrees. The viewpoint taken in this paper is just the opposite. It would be preferred that the abilities, skills and attitudes of a competent manager of educational planning, evaluation, and implementation be spelled out in clear-cut terminology. Any and all who could demonstrate the posession of these performances would be automatically granted the corresponding graduate credit or degree. Formal graduate study would become only one way to get there.

Accountability and Evaluation

Accountability refers to the necessity, both periodically and at a moment's notice, of rendering an account on how good a job one has done. Evaluation is a little more complicated and a great deal less fiscal. Fiscal accountability stresses legal budgetary control. Program accountability stresses the correlation between perceived needs and what has developed to meet them. Such evaluation tries to observe the difference between predictions (i.e., planning) and actuality (i.e., what happened). The next step is do something about the missing activities, links, or results. Hard data is necessary. Hard data is another way to describe objective evidence that can be seen and accepted by a wide audience. People from entirely different backgrounds must be able to understand and use any such evidence that wants the name of hard data. This type of evidence enables the citizen taxpayer to tell the difference between results in such a way as to be able to rate them. One way to rate is to ask, "What is the outcome of this treatment?" Another way to rate is to ask, "How much does this treatment cost?"

Obviously, accountability says, "Don't place your money on losers when you have a selection of winners!" The people to whom we are accountable have one simple question, "Did you bring about any gains or increments in learner achievement?" This is the challenge laid down by accountability. Typically, these people don't tighten the purse strings in the face of easily observable results.

DEVELOPMENT

("How many alternate paths will get you there?")

Development -- A Choice Rather Than a Destiny

Program Modifications

"I Want That in Writing"

A Few Viable Alternatives to "Keeping the Project the Way It Was"

Don't Do It All Yourself

Dream Up Technology

Brainstorm

Re-deal Your Administrators

Write It Down Daily

Plot Out the Doldrums

Program Development Is Not the Same as Mummification

The Expanded Budget Vs. the Growth Budget

Beyond the "Either/Or" Dilemma

"Choice" Means More Than "Crisis Diplomacy"

DEVELOPMENT -- A CHOICE RATHER THAN A DESTINY

There are educators who do not have any opinions at all. Everything they believe must have the urgency of a conviction. The right way to do things does not arouse much doubt in their minds. There is only one right way to do it. Such educators are rare. It is the intention of this document to make them even rarer.

Anyone engaged in program development undergoes the apprenticeship of experience. Experience can be understood in the sense of not making the same errors over and over again.

Program development is comparable to improving one's operation after seeing someone else do a better job faster and cheaper. If the slower and more expensive way doesn't do the job, one adopts other methods and techniques even if this involves paying finder's fees and royalties. In the long run, such additional costs are really economies.

When a program developper has a number of options open to him, he can choose the approach which comes closest to existing resources. Decision making involves making real choices rather than following the mysterious hand of fate. Fellow teammates will work up to peak potential when goals and methods are presented in terms of clear cut alternatives. No one likes to be told, "There's only one way to do it. My way." This breeds the habit of measuring results in terms of how much they cost. Once this has been estimated, one can ask, "Is it worth it?"

Program Modifications

Day-to-day program evaluation will reveal the need to make some changes. Fiscal budget change procedures reveal how difficult it is to make major program modifications. Frankly, changing line items is not the best way to modify programs effectively. There are other ways that are more effective and that involve less paperwork.

Here are a few of them:

- Have a list of ready-to-go alternatives
- Be prepared in advance for possible change points
- Leave yourself enough room to maneuver legally
- Maintain a priority list of unfunded but important objectives
- Pinpoint likely places that might be funded with specific economies elsewhere
- Preview the difficulties that will arise when you're ready to modify

"I Want That in Writing"

Everyone wants to simplify. This means cutting down on paperwork, red tape, and ambiguous situations. The harried administrator must simultaneously work with awareness of existing laws, rules, regulations, administrative policies, and funds available. When a change occurs, he wants it in writing to protect himself and to clarify his responsibilities.

Forms are one way to put it in writing, Even the most cumbersome form was once an attempt to simplify. Later, uniformity of form content seemed to offer a base for comparisons. The original need for a particular form was soon forgotten. Something that originated in the need to "plug a particular hole" is not always worthy of a five or ten year lifespan characterized by addition rather than by deletion of items. Filling out such a lengthy form for an authorization or permission that one knows in advance will be granted is not the best way to stress the simplification of paperwork. Abolishing such forms can lead to difficulties manifest in such comments as "No one ever told me!" and "Who authorized that?"

Paperwork should be used when it helps effectiveness. It should be avoided when it stiffles development. What you and your staff do is often more important than what gets eventually written up.

The following sections present a few viable alternatives to "keeping the project the way it was." The following titles give an overview of what is to follow :

Don't do it all yourself,
Dream up technology,
Brainstorm,
Re-deal your administrators,
Write it down daily,
Plot out the doldrums.

DON'T DO IT ALL YOURSELF : The importance of the one man show is now a thing of the past. The administrator who tries to do it all himself will find too much to read, too many meetings to attend, too little time to do it all, and too little to show for it all. Program development is the result of teamwork. Each person is important and each person has a worthwhile contribution to make. Simply to "delegate" is not enough. Start with something much simpler and with something less humbling to your "boss ego,"

Write down all the things you have to do in a single day. Pick out the three most important things you cannot pass on to your assistants. Pick out the three most obvious tasks you can delegate. Delegate them. Watch what happens. Often, you will find that tomorrow you can involve your staff even more. This is the kind of thing they like.

DREAM UP TECHNOLOGY : Budget examiners notice one thing about service oriented budgets. They are high on manpower and low on labor saving technology. Non-profit services are even more so than business enterprises. The answer to this is not limited to buying a lot of machinery which you will never use.

Auditors and evaluation committees are too alert to the padded budget to fall for this fiasco. In addition, in years of budget squeezes, any piece of equipment from pencil sharpener to cassette recorder must be backed up with a "job description" that leaves no accountability question unanswered.

Sit down with a stub of a pencil and a pad of paper. Start griping to yourself. List all the routine and menial jobs that must be done by your staff. Go into detail. Start talking with people responsible for these unpleasant chores. They will have a number of suggestions. After this, start looking around in catalogs. Be ready for the annoying salesmen who plague your door and telephone. Put these questions to them. Somewhere along the line you will find something that can fill the bill. Don't worry about "b[illegible]g" such machinery. Try to get a good rental price. If it is really worth its cost, let someone else tell you to buy it.

A high-functioning person won't be replaced by a machine. Someone who is tied down to routine work will be happy to move up once his job is made more important by the addition of technology. In both situations, you have developed your project by developing your staff through technology.

BRAINSTORM : Creativity is something that can't be legislated. All of a sudden it happens. It doesn't have a price tag. However, it is a demonstrable fact that hard workers eventually become more creative than those who wait around for something to happen. The reason for this is simple. Creativity is something a person makes happen.

It you think the ideas of the other person aren't worth much, it will show in the half-hearted way you listen. Listen to creative people. If you make them spell out everything in paper beforehand, you might turn off their

flow of ideas. Sometimes, the value of a creative thought is not in its precision so much as in its possibilities. Creative people are often sensitive to things that escape the busy project manager. You will also find that handling creative people will make you more creative and more patient.

RE-DEAL YOUR ADMINISTRATORS : Imagine how dull it would be if every card game were played without shuffling and re-dealing the cards. The uncertainty of it all makes things more exciting and more interesting. Have you ever thought of doing the same thing with your key administrators.

Look at it this way. Administrators often have a perspective of the whole picture of your operation and its key goals. This gives them insight that the task-centered worker does not have. If administrators spent as little as five per cent of their time the second year in task operations, it would be interesting to see what they could do with all this heightened understanding of the whole program.

Here is another viewpoint. Funders often try to cut budgets in the ranks of administration. For their purposes, anyone removed from direct contact with the clientele served (e.g. learners, students, trainees) is expendable in budget cuts. Putting these managerial types in the front lines for a portion of each day will keep staff happy and give decision makers a more profound awareness of what happens when choices are made.

WRITE IT DOWN DAILY : Program development consumes about fifty ideas for each new change. It is difficult to come up with one new suggestion let alone fifty of them for a few improvements. There are days when ideas just don't come. Sometimes, ideas are worked out in one's head that don't stand

up to the pressures of hard work. Most projects require a great deal of slow, steady, and hard daily effort. The glow that comes from brainstorming is one way to motivate to make the difficulty change itself into a challenge. Brainstorming is thus more of a motivational device than a solution. People who can talk together with no holds barred are in a better position to work for common goals.

Writing down the results of brainstorming each day is one way to keep from forgetting. There are other advantages to the habit of writing at least something every day. It forces you to concentrate over and over again on your most perplexing problems. Putting a few words in writing is one way to do and to plan something concrete. After a few days, you will begin to notice a pattern and structure to what you have written. This will enable you to tackle the problem with the acculumative weight of several days experience and thought.

Your objective here is not to write. Your objectives should be to think about your problems every day. This helps you to build upon your past experience. Each day is a chance for a new perspective. The first idea you write will not be necessarily the solution. The next day's idea will allow you to improve on your own best thought. In this way, the sequential gains from each day will help you approach your problems in a more creative way.

PLOT OUT THE DOLDRUMS: For the purpose of this discussion, a doldrum is any inactive and dull period in your calendar. It's that time of year when nothing seems to be moving. Most project activities are at a standstill. The annoying thing about doldrums is that it is usually

impossible for you to foresee them the first year of the project. The second year of the project, you are often so busy that you forget about anticipating them. You forget to do something about them.

Let's take an example. If you know that the second week of a particular month has been very unprofitable for the operation of your program, you should be able to do something about it the second time around if you plan ahead. There are many dull and routine jobs that must be handled sometime. If you save these jobs until the end of the project, you will find that this is not the best time to take care of them. At the end of a project too many things are happening to take time out to tidy up. A lot of little details that could have been handled during the doldrums have been forgotten in the whirlpool of closing down a program for the summer.

A sign of a good manager is his ability to get things done in the doldrums. Here are a few hints on how to do it.

- Keep a file marked, "Things to do when I have the time."
- Set up another file, "Things for my staff to do when they have the time."
- Remember: Your goal is <u>not</u> to have a lot of busy work. Your objectives is to take care of secondary priority items once the main priority activities are well enough along to take care of themselves.
- Don't be afraid to do one or two of these necessary but secondary details whenever you have a mini-doldrum of 15 to 20 minutes.
- The mere act of thinking about these "doldrum" areas is one of the best ways of making sure that even these moments of inertia and inactivity contribute to the eventual success of your undertakings.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT IS NOT THE SAME AS MUMMIFICATION: Mummification originated with the ancient Egyptians. It is the process of preserving a dead body or a dead program in the same state it was at the moment of death. It's an expensive process. It takes a lot of time. It's main accomplishment is the preservation of the "status quo." This is not always a bad idea. In a time of constant change, it is an expensive idea.

When you walk into a program that is being treated as a mummy rather then as a living reality, you will notice several striking situations. The people in the program are pretty much the same as last year. They're doing the same sort of thing. The data they process has not changed much. The equipment, techniques, and the material they use are about the same as last year, but more worn out and less effective. Not much significant change has occurred. Just like the people, data, and things in the program, the objectives have not changed either by addition, new growth, or judicious deletion.

There are other signs of mummification. One of them is productivity at about the same level or less than last time around. You may also notice that if the staff has changed, it's been a rapid changeover. People haven't stayed with the project. Some people on the project may have a high rate of absenteeism. Their morale may not be the best. You may notice a constant stream of complaints and errors. Looking over their requests for next years budget, you can't miss one tendency: a higher cost for the same amount of services. The program has responded to the nudge of inflation by increased budgeting rather than by increased productivity.

Program development is not the same thing as mummification. Here are a number of specific differences. Development aims at a more interesting job for each staff member. This means that each worker will be treated as an individual. He will be given greater responsibility. This is an ideal

opportunity for self-development. It results in better utilization of staff skills. This leads to real achievement, i.e., something that can be measured. The recognition for this achievement will go beyond external rewards. Self-evaluation will be the criterion for each program person. All of this adds up to accelerated growth and development. In the area of finance, this means more efficiency, more productivity, and more goals accomplished for each dollar spent. This leads to improved morale.

Here's a few ideas on how you can apply all this to your own program development. Overall deterioration sets in perceptibly whenever administrators try to maintain the "status quo" in the face of a constantly changing challenge. Adaptation is like shaving, if you don't do it everyday, people can't help noticing your oversight. Letting things go is like growing a beard. If you don't trim it now and then, it's a mess. The lesson is obvious. Evaluation isn't complicated unless you forget it's a daily affair and let things pile up into a crisis.

The next three sections try to make this concept of development more specific by going into details :

- The Expanded Budget Vs. the Growth Budget
- Beyond the "Either/Or" Dilemma
- "Choice" Means More Than "Crisis Diplomacy"

With these basic applications in mind, you should be ready to start thinking of planning as deliberate choice from a wide variety of alternatives.

THE EXPANDED BUDGET VS. THE GROWTH BUDGET: The first question to ask is "What is the difference between an expanded budget and a growth budget?" An expanded budget means more money is spent without noticeably increasing the number of people involved in the project, the amount of data processed, the things accomplished, or the objectives obtained. In short, an expanded budget means more money must be spent for the same results as last time.

A growth budget can be recognized by the simple fact that it ties in increased expenses to increased productivity. In the area of salary, this may mean that less people do the same amount of work or that an increase in staff is tied to an increase of staff workloads. Either change in salary boils down to less money per objective obtained. It does not mean salary cuts for individual staff members. Sometimes this is due to less absenteeism and to increased morale. At other times, this is due to the fact that an experienced staff can accomplish more in less time and with much greater effectiveness. A growth budget is able to accomplish the same amount of achievement for less money. It is able to accomplish more goals with the same budget. Any increase in budget is more than met by the increase in achievement.

All of this has implications for your program. You can't predict tommorrow with any more accuracy than we can predict the weather. This does not excuse you from reacting appropriately when an unexpected program change comes up out of nowhere. After a while, you'll be able to improve your predictions and your planning in the face of the unanticipated. This "process intelligence" does more good than pat solutions which don't quite seem to fit the daily challenge.

The inevitable nudge of inflation can place today's budget on tomorrow's critical list. This economic fact of life forces research to come up with

good ideas that cost less but work just as well. This is the solidly researched basis for a growth budget.

This commercial for accountability is sponsored by the symbol "$" for money. An accountability $ystem demands dollar value for each budget item, and it's about time.

Increased costs must come from somewhere. Increased productivity is one of the least painful sources provided it is not falsely equated with "putting in more time."

BEYOND THE "EITHER/OR" DILEMMA: There is nothing unusual about hearing from staff people the following request: "Give us more money, more personnel, more time, and more equipment." Such a request should be interpreted neither as fraud nor as exaggeration.

A counterpart to this request is the fear of evaluation. This fear is often expressed in a number of indirect ways. People aren't available at appointment times with the outside evaluator. Staff members answer in one or two words questions that deserve longer and more detailed explanations. People want to give the impression that everything is all right. They repeat in endless refrain, "There's nothing to worry about!"

Don't fall victim to the Don Quixote complex by trying to tilt with secondhand weapons against the windmills of the traditional way of doing things. Making a fool of yourself is not an adequate solution to anything.

You need a wide range of acceptable alternatives from which to choose. Random cost-cutting is not the only way.

When people manifest fear over an evaluation they are telling you that they feel threatened in some way or other. They are afraid that something tragic may happen. Their money may be cut. Their personnel may be fired. Their project may be rated a failure. The "either/or" mentality expresses itself in three dichotomies. Dichotomy number one: "Either the budget must be cut or it must be increased." Dichotomy number two: "Our project must be evaluated either a success or a failure." Dichotomy number three: "Either our entire project must be refunded or nothing will be refunded."

Such an approach is called the "either/or dilemma." It forgets that there are many other alternatives.

One of the most common alternatives to the "either/or dilemma" can be found in the efficiency study. Efficiency refers to the ability to produce

results. It is the ability to produce results immediately. It is the ability to attain pre-determined goals without wasting time or other resources.

When you go beyond the "either/or" dilemma in program development, you will find several easily corrected errors. You will find employee under-utilization. This means that certain staff members do not have jobs that sufficiently challenge their ability. In contrast to this, you will also find employee over-utilization. This means that certain key persons are doing too much. The difficulty is not that they do too much. The difficulty is that, when they have too many irons in the fire, certain routine but necessary tasks are liable to be neglected.

When you start concentrating on productivity as one of your goals you will notice that individual differences in sensitivity subside into the background. This does not mean that you neglect them. This means that instead of concentrating on things that can make people nervous, defensive, or anxious, you will concentrate on utilizing unused potential. People like to be told about their unused potential. It lets them know they have abilities you recognize and appreciate. When a job has been enriched, you will find out that the employee has improved and that the program has improved. This is a valid alternative to either keeping the project "the way it was last year" or completely abandoning it.

"CHOICE" MEANS MORE THAN "CRISIS DIPLOMACY": Choice refers to the act of selection. Choice is based upon the availability of alternatives and different possibilities. In general, it can be stated that the wider the range of choice, the greater the likelihood of selecting an appropriate strategy, presuming that everything else is equal. "Everything else" refers to a fairness of attitude and calmness of atmosphere in which to make the choice.

The crisis situation is much too menacing to provide a calm basis for choice. A crisis is ordinarily understood to be a turning point for better or for worse. It is an acute situation. A crisis takes on an atmosphere of impending doom. There is always a certain amount of urgency about a crisis because it is the decisive moment. Consequently, a time of crisis is an unstable period. Like all crucial moments it upsets the current state of affiars. The crisis is too emotional a occassion for calm and quiet reflection. "People must decide in a hurry!" "They must get things done at once!" These crisis slogans do not lead to the best choice of alternatives.

In a crisis, there are at least three temptations. The first one is to think of constantly expanding the budget without expanding the services offered. The second temptation is to think of each budgeting decision only in terms of an "either/or" dilemma: you either get all you ask for or you can do nothing. This is not a good strategy. The third temptation of crisis thinking is to pretend that things cannot wait for a well thought-out judgment. A constant build-up of pressure has reached a peak where "something must be done." The experienced administrator can always find more peaceful ways of doing things. He remembers the definition of the philosopher who defined peace as "the tranquility that comes from placing

things in order." Tranquility is calm. It's free from agitation, excitement, or disturbance. It gets things done. It gets things done quietly and efficiently. This is the way to resolve a crisis for the better.

PLANNING AS "CHOICE"

One reason for planning is to specify "What we're going to do next year." This means that each member of a team has a clear idea of "Exactly what his job is." When plans are made in an open forum, it is easy for each person to express his insight and preferences. Insights refer to experiences on the job that enable a worker to do his job more effectively. This increased effectiveness leads to greater productivity. Productivity is simply an increase in accomplishments per dollar expended and per hour spent on a given objective. Personal preferences are important for a number of objective reasons. People work better when they feel that they can make a personal and unique contribution to the task at hand. When this imput goes beyond the accomplishment of detailed directions and includes goal selection, the human being in this role tends to function on a higher level.

The face-to-face exchange of suggestions and comments between administrators and staffs allows people to learn the give-and-take necessary to facilitate staff development. Development means that everyone has a change to grow in appropriate directions. It goes beyond the cold and impersonal pyramid of authority that emerges as the dominant impression whenever one examines the typical organizational chart. Even the most highly accurate organizational chart cannot substitute for the more human element of cooperation. Cooperation means that people can and do work together to attain mutually agreeable goals and objectives.

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

("How do the costs compare with the results?")

Fiscal Accounting -- More Than Cost Accounting

Fiscal Accountability

"The Appropriation's about the Same as Last Year"

A Few Opening Suggestions

Plan on the Installment Plan

Ask the Kids about Time and Money

Hunt Down Unproductive Dollars

Criticize Yourself

Tool Down Your Project

Simulate a 30 Second TV Spot

Fiscal Accountability Explains Many Things

Program Effectiveness

Public Expectations

Measurable Accomplishments

Quality Control

Cost Analysis

Systematic Evaluation

Role of the Decision Maker

Information Does Not Make Decisions

But Policy Is Made on the Basis of Information

The Human Mind of the Executive Must Respond

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY -- MORE THAN COST ACCOUNTING

It is obvious that fiscal accountability stresses getting the most product for dollar value. It is not so obvious that this type of responsibility can be accomplished in a number of ways in addition to pre-project and post-project evaluations and cost accounting.

Fiscal accountability need not be a complicated recordkeeping system. At the end of any given day, it should be possible to find out several things about any learner :

- ATTENDANCE (How much time has he or she given to the program?)
- TARGETS (Which programs objectives were attempted?)
- TECHNOLOGY (Which learning resources were utilized?)
- TESTS (Which program objectives have been attained?)
- OVERALL EVALUATION (How is the learner progressing through the overall sequence of the program?)
- COST (How much has been spent for this learner to date?)

Such an overview will be possible if daily records are kept simple and precise. The important thing is to avoid being buried in a mountain of paper at the end of the project when all of these items are added up after it is too late to change anything. If these daily signals or warning lights are used every day, it is within the range of possibility to take any necessary remedial action when things aren't going right. This easy-to-apply kind of fiscal accountability will do more than lamentations after it's all over.

Fiscal Accountability

All programs need someone to receive and disburse funds. If each program has a separate financial officer, this could lead to an unnecessary multiplier effect for each fiscal accounting system. This expense could be drastically cut by having only a single reimbursement unit. Such a unit will save money, cut down paperwork, reduce the percentage of overhead, stress a single administrative budget for several programs, and unify things in a very efficient and centralized system. The idea here is not to add on yet another layer of administration. Nor is ironclad bureaucracy the goal here as much as the avoidance of duplication. Joint funding will help avert the sensitivity of who and what gets cut. It won't be a question of pruning so much as a question of maneuverability. Simplification of fiscal procedures is the specific objective behind fiscal accountability.

Tightening various procedures is thus intended to lessen paperwork. These moves to simplify are backed up by shorter and more relevant forms which pinpoint information upon which decisions are to be made. Coding systems are to save time and space, not to cause confusion. Precise terminology is used to define rather than to impress. Such precisions are not an attempt to complicate things. This requires planning to make sure that all expenses have been foreseen. Computing expenses on a percentage basis saves paperwork locally, statewide, and federally. For example, if a salary changes, the percentage will remain the same and no additional paperwork will result.

"The Appropriation's about the Same as Last Year"

This title may be true from a dollar and cents point of view. As far as priority areas and legislative mandates are concerned, things are never the same for long. This means that if the budget total remains the same, this dollar amount cannot buy exactly the same amount of services. The same allocation this year cannot provide enough cash to maintain the same programs as last year. Priorities must be established that enable program goals, rather than uniform percentage cuts in all areas regardless of value, to be the criteria of growth or decline for specific functions. Placing activities in ranked order is the first step to asking, "Are we getting good mileage for our dollars?" Identifying the weakest link among top priority goals is a basic step in directing resources as appropriately as possible to areas where personnel, time, materials, and dollars can have the greatest impact.

Years do add up. When the basic refunding question becomes "What must we cut this year if the appropriation's going to be about the same as last year?", it's time that zero growth means staff reduction of some sort or other. Realignment of staff demands a certain amount of maneuverability. This flexibility cannot coexist with a rigidity based upon local interpretations rather than federal decisions and guidelines. There are many legitimate and legal ways to secure alternate funding from other sources. It is rare that a program demonstrated to have significant impact on children and learners can't get funded somewhere. The trouble is that some programs tend to have a very diffuse, i.e., a shotgun, effect; they aim at vague rather than at specific goals. Categorical programs try to attain one objective as the top priority. Experimental funds should not be expected to continue indefinitely, year after year.

Accountability has obvious connections with dollars spent. The professional educator doesn't stop there. Responsibility can have wider dimensions than "firing the inefficient." The job of research and evaluation is to come up with other possibilities that will probably work in a given situation. Here are a few suggestions for openers :

> Plan on the installment plan,
>
> Ask the kids about time and money,
>
> Hunt down unproductive dollars,
>
> Criticize yourself,
>
> Tool down your projects,
>
> Simulate a 30 second TV spot.

PLAN ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN: Installment credit is nothing new to American society. It means using things before you pay for them. Planning on the installment plan is a little bit different. It means coming up with a number of viable alternatives each of which have a particular price tag.

Let's take an example. Instead of demanding $10,000 in a lump sum, a particular instructional program specifies four self-standing components in its request: A, B, C, D. Each part has a price tag. If the entire program can't be funded, parts A and B, the top two priority items are specified as the most urgent and the most desirable in the opinion of the program planner. If the funding agency sees fit to differ with this ranking it has a choice of alternatives, each of which are acceptable to the program planners.

This type of fiscal accountability demands more than specifying the price of each component. It is absolutely essential that the program manager be capable of determining the relative importance of each activity. His role is not limited to that of the impartial evaluator. He must also be a saleman. He must be able to show the funding agency exactly what is required and exactly how much it will cost. If he makes his plea clearly and cogently, he will find that people will listen to him. They will vote for his project with dollars. When the supply of dollars is short they will be able to know where their dollars can do the most good in terms of clearly delineated results. They won't feel like they're buying unseen merchandise.

ASK THE KIDS ABOUT TIME AND MONEY: There is nothing new about asking for student suggestions. This has been going on for a long time. What is advocated here is giving the student a certain percentage of program time. For example, if six hours are consumed in the program each day, it would not be impossible to give one or two hours, two or three days a week, to students to do with as they please. They would simply be told, "Plan something you think is worth doing. After you have planned everything, try it out. If it works, let us know, and we will see what we can do to get you more time."

If the students fumble, not too much has been lost. Their mangled activity could then be curtailed after a reasonable trial. On the other hand, if the students succeed, you have gained and it is possible to go on to the next step. The next step is not just giving the students more time. The next step is giving them money. A certain proportion of the budget, perhaps one or two percent, might be devoted to student planned goals. Students would not be told to spend money. Anyone can spend money. They would be

told to budget the money. Budget means deciding beforehand. Budgeting means deciding priortities. Budgeting means thinking over all the possible alternatives and finally coming up with objectives that are obviously relevant and practical. This type of brainwork is democratic and educational.

This is something students are not accustomed to do. They are used to being told what to do in a program. They have often been allowed to make suggestions as long as they did not touch any money. Perhaps this is why their suggestions can seem to lack a certain amount of reality. When they are given a budget to develop, you will find out they can take on a new sense of responsibility. Don't worry: you are not going to lose anything if the program they plan is impractical or unworkable. Before the students spend the money, you must approve the budget. If they have done a good job with one or two percent of the total funds, you know yourself that you can always increase the amount at their discretion. Be prepared to find out that students are very shrewd shoppers. They have lived in the world a short time, but they have learned to make the most of it.

HUNT DOWN UNPRODUCTIVE DOLLARS: Unproductive dollars chew up program money without producing the results you want them to. An unp 51 uctive dollar is money spent without receiving some visible evidence of value received. A productive dollar is something that yields results. It furnishes undeniable evidence that is being well spent. The benefits are easy to specify. Its profits are something that go beyond dollars. Examples include learning and effective attainment of program goals. A productive dollar has the effect of contributing to increased productivity. Productivity here means the improvement of program effectiveness.

Program effectiveness can be measured in different ways: administrative efficiency, staff effectiveness, and contentment of participants to list only

a few of them. Every administrator has a list of things he would like to do if only he had the money. Tracking down unproductive dollars allows you to have more money for these unfundable extras.

This is the kind of evaluation you do long before the project is over. As soon as it is possible to attach price tags to project activities, you will find out that you can identify unproductive dollars. Once you've identified them, your job is to stop spending them. This is a very specific way that daily on-going evaluation can improve the overall functioning of your program.

CRITICIZE YOURSELF!: The origin of the word "to criticize" comes from the Greek word "to judge." It means that you consider the merits and demerits of your project and act accordingly. Criticism goes beyond merely finding fault. It examines policies and results. Criticism does not mean the same thing as blaming, censuring, or condemning. Criticism in the constructive sense means doing something about the things you know are not correct in your project.

Criticism does not mean that you have to confess and publicly admit every error you make. The most important concern is to do something about it. Criticism allows you a second chance at planning. It is often impossible to preview and foresee all the possible difficulties that can occur once a program is on its own. When you recognize a specific difficulty in your management of the project, functional criticism allows you to do something about it immediately. It allows you to take corrective measures.

An offshoot of self-criticism has been called the critical path method. Another tool for this process is the flowchart. Flowcharting does not mean writing a long complicated 16 foot diagram. Critical path methods or

flowcharting stress the establishment of priorities. This means that you must decide exactly what is important. In order to do this you must be critical enough of yourself to make the correct judgment at the right time. If you find something wrong in your operation, don't expect to change it immediately.

- Set up the critical path, i.e., a number of special concrete steps that will lead to the attainment of a better functioning unit.
- Don't forget: a critical path is not a mechanical thing. Without people, it won't work.
- A better functioning unit does not refer only to technology. It means that the people under you must be ready to work together.

TOOL DOWN YOUR PROJECTS: The title of this section is another way of saying, "Get rid of excess baggage." Excessive baggage refers to anything in your project that is not obviously related to the attainment of project goals. During the first year of a project, a number of things can creep into its structure. They can be later trimmed away without hurting the program. When the tooling down of a project starts with eliminating excess baggage, you will find out that it is easy to eliminate extraneous activities that can be cut without lessening the overall impact.

One simple way to begin is to ask yourself, "What can be removed from this project without causing any noticeable difference?" This is a better way to trim down your budget than to automatically reduce every item across the board by 5, 10, or 15 per cent.

Tooling down a project obviously means spending less money. It also means much more. A project can be compared to theatrical play. The script is written. The players are cast. The rehearsals begin. The first time around, nothing seems to fit. Each actor has interpreted his role in his own way. Plans which were apparently all inclusive suddenly seem to be

inadequate. Something that looked good on paper now seems awkward when spoken. The stage may not yet be set right. Somehow, as the rehearsal proceeds, things start to work themselves out. Problems are solved not by theory, but by practical experience.

It's much the same way in a project. On paper, some non-essentials seem important. When it comes time to produce, you find out that non-essential details can be removed in such a way as to actually increase the effectiveness of your program goals.

One of the signs of good planning with fiscal accountability in mind is the ability to think on several different levels of operation. Two prominent levels are (1) overall goals and (2) the everyday functioning of a program. If you think of tooling down as getting rid of excess baggage rather than merely cost reduction, you are probably on the right track to success in both areas.

SIMULATE A THIRTY SECOND T.V. SPOT: The typical administrator is able to communicate orally. He is able extemporaneously to stand up before a group and express himself clearly. Unfortunately, any time a person speaks without adequate preparation, he tends to talk too long and to utter too many empty phrases.

Rather than introduce these redundancies into our presentation, try to think of a thirty second T.V. spot commercial. You must get your message across. You must explain to people your most important program goals. You do not have any time to get bogged down in needless details.

One good way to prepare a 60 second commercial is to simply start writing out or talking about your ideas. Use a dictaphone or a tape-recorder. Have your ideas typed up. After you have them written out,

try reading them. Time yourself. Is it longer than thirty seconds? If the answer is "No," you have succeeded. If the answer is "Yes," you must edit. You must remove something. You must delete.

This is not a very complicated idea. It assumes you realize that people will only listen for so long. Short words sink in. A lot of talking turns people off.

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY EXPLAINS MANY THINGS:

- Program Effectiveness
- Public Expectations
- Measurable Accomplishments

THE POPULAR NOTION OF ACCOUNTABILITY

It's easy to equate accountability with the search for sensational headlines. It's not quite as easy to realize that accountability does more than track down specific instances of waste and mismanagement. Spending public dollars in the face of public criticism is more than a hobby. It demands clear objectives, measurable criteria, and a wide choice of alternatives. One difficulty here is that the general public doesn't want a complex answer to the complex question, "What are you delivering for the dollars expended?" Legislators chime in with, "If we are going to appropriate more money to these programs, what assurance do we have that it's a good investment?" Anyone interested in progress asks, "What happened as a result of spending all this money?"

As soon as an evaluator tries to supply the technical answers to these technic questions, he is met with the critical reaction, "I can't understand your evaluatio What I need is a simplified and readable report! I want to know if your work is a success or a failure." In other words, anyone who spends public monies is responsible to more than the experts and his immediate superior. The general public must clearly understand what is being achieved through wise and prudent expenditures of tax dollars.

This means that accountability goes beyond the technical aspects of evaluation to come up with evidence of success that can stand examination in the spotlight of public opinion. Such an encounter is laden with emotional components because no

one wants to see his taxes increased. In Greek, we find Plutarch telling us that "People who are periodically called to account tend to do a better job." Presidents Johnson and Nixon probably had these ideas in mind when the word "accountability" came to take on a very precise meaning in the 1960's and 1970's. This meaning can be interpreted as a national effort to balance the "cost" and "quality" in education in such a way as to minimize cost while maximizing quality. Enthusiasm for such an equation is based upon many motives, not the least of which is, "We all want every educational dollar to produce the maximum possible effect!" After years of experience concluding that more dollars does not always bring about "more" education, people have begun to feel that there are other solutions than "more money" to attain visible and observable results.

Public disclosure of results is the new element in today's definition of accountability. Recall of defective merchandise and price controls are two palpable non-educational equivalents of this stress on "guaranteed product and guaranteed results." The product must live up to the promises.

MEASURABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE:

- Quality Control
- Cost Analysis
- Systematic Evaluation

A FEW OF THE COMPLEXITIES

No one can be held accountable for unmeasurable results. There are many goals in education that can't be measured with hard data. The dilemma here is that many of these objectively imponderable goals are valuable even though there presently aren't any instruments to evaluate them. We all admit the value of a "good attitude" even though few of us can give an unchallengable definition of precisely what a good attitude is.

Accountability doesn't stop with the reporting of results. When program goals are not achieved, a complicated question arises, "Does this mean that we have failed or that we have done the best possible in the given circumstances?" Good slogans don't always translate themselves into adequate policies, or into appropriate goals, or into achievable objectives.

An illiterate child obviously "needs" to learn to read and write. Such a prescription is easy to make. This same child may feel no "need" to learn. He lacks the motivation necessary to learn. Literacy for him is not a desired object in his daily list of priorities.

Any program that takes for its goal, the attainment of basic literacy, may get nowhere unless somewhere along the line the learner's attitude is improved. People don't ordinarily learn in spite of themselves. If you start off by saying, "I'm going to change your lousy attitude," you will not give them the impression of sincerely wanting to help them grow.

ROLE OF THE DECISION MAKER

- Information does not Make Decisions
- But Policy Is Made on the Basis of Information
- The Human Mind of the Executive Must Respond

Almost everyone can agree on vague goals. We all nod our heads for "honesty, health, literacy, and freedom." When it comes down to specifics, a number of readily discernible disagreements come to light. This includes more than translating broad terms such as "well" and "successfully" into "formative" and "summative" evaluation. Formative evaluation occurs during a program. Summative evaluation occurs after a program. An even more essential type of evaluation is "needs analysis" which takes place before a program. Whether we call this "pre-product evaluation, precursive evaluation, setting of priorities, planning, forecasting, needs analysis, market analysis, establishing specifications, or accountability-awareness," it is an element that comes before the development of any successful program based upon research rather than serendipity.

Not every goal of a program is equally important. This presumes that needs can be assessed in order of urgency. All of this would seem to call for some sort of systematic approach. Many strategies can be used to do this. Comprehensiveness and clarity are essential elements of any goal no matter what its source. Putting all of this together into a system forces decision makers to spell out their expectations and evaluation criteria in terms of explicit policy decisions before choosing specific measurement instruments. Doing all this by statistical analysis is not always a bad idea when determining

fundability provided the criteria are set by professionals in areas not limited to data processing. The next question to ask is, "What chance do our solutions have of working?"

The following questions may help you pinpoint where to begin.

____ A. YES NO -- The administrative system I have developed is in constant need of improvement.

____ B. YES NO -- I can cite specific instances of where my administrative procedures need to be changed to meet the changing needs of a future I cannot clearly predict.

____ C. YES NO -- I am anticipating futuristic developments by trying out promising techniques and approaches developed elsewhere that fit in with my program objectives.

____ D. YES NO -- I have a full developed approach to the collection of the data necessary for day-to-day evaluation.

____ E. YES NO -- I can cite specific decisions that were based upon the data referred to in question D above.

____ F. YES NO -- I think that it is dangerous to tinker with the project I manage now that it is under full steam. Too much change can disrupt things and make it impossible to know where we are going.

____ G. YES NO -- I would rather attack today's problems than worry about things that don't concern me now. I will wait until I have more data before planning for unforeseeable goals.

____ H. YES NO -- Every time I borrow an idea from somewhere else, I feel that I still must almost completely redesign it until it fits my situation. In this way, I almost feel that is no longer someone else's idea; I feel it is my idea.

____ I. YES NO -- Everytime I go over the amount of data we collect, I feel that we are collecting too much, but I don't know where to cut back. Every time I find myself deciding policy on insufficient data, I feel I don't have enough, but I don't always know what I am missing.

____ J. YES NO -- I can point to specific mistakes I have made when I acted upon highly verified program data. I can point to successful decisions based upon my hunches even when I went contrary to the best data available.

If you answered YES to questions A to E and if you answered either YES or NO or NEITHER to questions F to J, you agree with the author. Don't get too complacent, these are only opinions. The questions are still complicated.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECYCLING

("How should we do it next time around?")

Recycling -- An Aggressive Approach to Systematic Refunding

Success Can Be Contagious

Transfer Programs, Not People

Recycling Alternatives

Zero in on Deficiencies

Double Plan Your Budget

Demonopolize

Miniaturize It

Recycle Yourself

Rewrite for a Different Population

Spell Out Your Gains Score

Recycling : Not the Same Thing as Maintenance of the "Status Quo"

How to Enlarge the Perimeters of Your Concentric Circle

Distinguishing Between Research Dollars and Program Dollars

RECYCLING -- AN AGGRESSIVE APPROACH TO SYSTEMATIC REFUNDING

One of the obvious questions for recycling a project is, "Will we be refunded?" One of the less obvious questions is, "Can our project stand on its own feet financially? Is it now self-supporting? What can we do to make it self-funding?" This last compound question is not always pertinent to a particular project. The following ideas are intended for those cases in which such inquiries are appropriate.

Automatic refunding that continues the status quo (with perhaps an increased budget to make up for inflation) may or may not be the best solution if one considers other dimensions than program survival. An example may be helpful here. If it is found that five or six projects seem to be doing the same thing in slightly different ways, the aggressive approach to systematic refunding will do more than say "Yes" or "No" to each different program. Inquiries will be made into such questions as, "Can these programs and projects be merged into a single functioning unit?" or "How would coordination of both administrators and participants influence the funding and efficiency of this program?" These are the type of questions that could make any project director, in search of next year's funds, break out into a cold sweat.

The secret of the aggressive approach avoids all this. Instead of waiting for funding agencies to ask these questions, project directors and evaluation teams could begin asking them themselves. This would give a sense of control and of breadth of vision that would work wonders in revitalizing even the most lethargic routine. This is merely an example of how program growth can be measured in other dimensions than budget growth.

Success Can Be Contagious

Something that works can be transplanted to work elsewhere through staff development. This development includes awareness, imitation, and motivation. Awareness can range from mutual visitation and idea exchanges to in-service education. Imitation is the basic human tendency that allows people to improve through observation, discovery, and adaptation. Motivation replaces the "It's hopeless" syndrome with the attitude that "Something can be done!"

People facing problems need solutions. A solution is something that will work in my situation. These answers are sometimes quite easy to implement. The main difficulty was that no one locally had ever thought of it before. In addition, unawareness of its success elsewhere led to ignoring many unconvential approaches. For example, a supervisor, who had little response by paying his staff to take in-service training Saturdays or during the summer, achieved full participation when he copied another district's idea of calling off school for the students but not for the teachers one afternoon a month.

When time comes to fund a program for the fourth or fifth year under experimental funds, it is a good opportunity to ask, "If it's that good, shouldn't it be part of the general tax-supported programs in place of something less beneficial?" This is part of the self-renewal process. This is not an "add on" suggestion. It says instead, "Replace outmoded programs with tried and proven approaches."

Transfer Programs, Not People

An experimental program starts with a hunch, not a proof, that a new approach will work. It is tried out in enough cases to find out if it's a method with wide applicability. When it works in one place, it's tested elsewhere to remove the Hawthorne effect, the group effect, and the originating staff effects. As soon as a technique, a resource, or a program is found to work in a wide variety of circumstances, it leaves the realm of research.

This means that the researchers go on to new experiments. It also means that the "tried and proven" program should replace less successful programs. For example, if the experimental approach has been found more successful in teaching flowcharting, it doesn't mean that both the traditional and experimental approaches must be funded by district dollars. It means that the teachers using the now outmoded methods must be retrained to do their job of teaching flowcharting more effectively. The researchers go on to new experiemnts. The traditional flowcharting teachers are retrained in the newer methods. No one is fired or replaced, but each worker is upgraded in performance and technology. In this way, successful programs have been transplanted and less effective techniques have been eliminated. All this updating avoids the thoughtless temptation to lengthen and lengthen the school day by "adding on" rather than shorten it by "survival of the fittest."

Recycling looks to the future. It also looks at the past so as to avoid past errors and misdirections. The need to refund is so much a part of survival that it is easy to forget other necessary questions. Here are a few of these easy to forget inquiries :

Zero in on deficiencies,

Double plan your budget,

Demonopolize,

Miniaturize it,

Recycle yourself,

Rewrite for a different population,

Spell out your gains score.

ZERO IN ON DEFICIENCIES: The staff and administration of a project are the people most aware of its deficiencies. A deficiency is anything that an expert can recognize as wrong with your project. A deficiency is also anything that anyone, whether an expert or an informed layman, can recognize as wrong with your project. Some deficiencies are almost impossible to correct. When this type of deficiency plagues your project, you must do something about it. You must be able to show to your staff and to outsiders that you have at least tried to remedy it.

You zero in on one deficiency once you realize that you can't attack everything simultaneously. You must come up with something that works. Try to start by isolating public deficiency number one. Let this be the object of your efforts. After public deficiency number one is corrected, you will have time enough to concentrate on number two. Trying to do too

much at random is worse then trying nothing. When you pinpoint one main target, you find out that results can be attained. These results will be visible enough to show people you mean business.

Your staff and outsiders want to feel that something is happening. If you tackle one deficiency at a time, you will find out that improvements will occur. Problems can be solved.

DOUBLE PLAN YOUR BUDGET: Most administrators have thoroughly planned their budget. This takes a long time and effort. When you are told to double plan your budget, you are not asked to take twice as much time or to make twice as much effort. You've already done all you can.

Double planning is a different concept. It simply means to plan your budget as usual yourself. You then call in your staff to come up with a different budget. A different budget doesn't necessarily mean more money. It means that you tell your staff the total amount available. You leave them on their own initiative to come up with their listing of line functions. Many staff members never produce good ideas simply because they never have been asked. You might be surprised at how creative and original normal staff people can be when they are given the chance. The human tendency to repeat things "the way they were done before" is not always a universal instinct. There are people who do come up with new ideas.

Even if the staff members who double plan your budget come up with a lemon or a bomb, you and they still have gained something. They will be more aware of the difficulties you had planning your budget with limited available resources. This gives you a more understanding staff.

DEMONOPOLIZE: Monopoly refers to exclusive ownership of a number of prerogatives and functions. Monopoly gives a certain amount of power to the monopolizer. The trouble with monopoly is that it kills competition. Competition is a source of good ideas: people tend to try to produce more in order to do a better job than competitors.

Aggressive project managers are interested in renewing their project for next year. This concern with their program sometimes makes them unaware of the fact that they are being monopolizers. Why are they monopolizers? They are monopolizers because they consider renewing their program next year only under their management and only under their control. The idea never occured to them that maybe somebody else could do a better job.

There is one simple way for you to stop being a monopolizer. That is to demonopolize your program. How do you do this? You do it by asking yourself one simple question: "What part of our program, what part of our project, which part of our goals could be better accomplished by someone else?" To an insecure administrator, this question can be demoralizing. He's afraid he's going to lose control of something. To an aggressive refunder, this approach to recycling has at least one advantage. Whenever you get rid of program functions that can be better done by someone else, you will be able to concentrate precisely on those functions which your program does better than any other.

MINIATURIZE IT: A miniature can be defined as a copy on a much reduced scale. Aggressive miniaturization includes more than cutting down the size your project.

Miniaturization is done for a number of reasons. A large project with a large budget can be reproduced elsewhere if an equally large sum of money

is available. This is not always possible for a variety of local reasons. If you could take your successful project with a budget of $100,000 and ask yourself one question, you would be able to miniaturize it. This question is simply: "What would our project look like if the budget were cut down to $50,000, 30,000, or 20,000?" No one wants this spector of a reduced budget to become a reality. This is why such questions are usually avoided. The reason for asking this question is not to cut back your money. The reason for asking it is to develop a method of transplanting your project to localities where program dollars may be scarce resources.

Miniaturization forces you to think of somebody else with a different budget and a different set of resources. It forces you to distinquish essential activities of your operation from the expendable trimmings. It forces you to take the practical steps necessary to develop a program that can be imitated and used elsewhere with a minimum of retooling.

RECYCLE YOURSELF: There is nothing wrong with staying on a project for two or three years. This is one way to bring it to fulfillment and to make sure that everything goes right. However, there are other ways to increase your effectiveness. If you have worked on an original project that has brought out your best, you will find that you have grown. You may have grown too big and too fast for the project you planned a year ago. Maybe keeping you on at a salary commensurate with your worth is going to cost more than the project can afford. It may be time to recycle yourself.

Recycling means retraining or growth. It means that, after you have attained a certain amount of development, you are ready to move on to bigger and better things. It is not necessary for you to physically leave the project, but you ought to ask yourself this question, "Where should I go

from here?" This will reveal many things to you:

- Possible professional job openings
- Directions for future personal growth
- Re-evaluation of your competitive title or salary opportunities
- Awareness of your recent past growth.
- Reasons for contentment (if you stay).

When staying on the job is not your only option, you will find that your judgments about your value to the project will become more objective. When you start to dream of "other worlds to conquer," you will share in the wisdom of Alexander the Great who didn't rest on his past laurels. Recycling yourself, even mentally, can make you an impartial evaluator. Any increase in objectivity and impartiality adds to the value of your project.

REWRITE FOR A DIFFERENT POPULATION: The manager of a project has no choice. He must think in terms of a specific population for his project. In anything that concerns the everyday functioning of his program, he must have in mind the distinctive needs of a very specific population.

Going beyond such a limited viewpoint is not easy. It is necessary if the benefits of a particular program are to be applied elsewhere. Since it is unlikely that the precise population description you have in your local situation will be found elsewhere, it is unlikely that your program can be replicated elsewhere unless you make provisions for different population characteristics.

There are two mistakes to avoid here: (1) thinking only of your limited population and (2) trying to come up with a program that will work for anyone anywhere. Both mistakes are equally dangerous. The executive who is aware of the needs of populations other than his own is by that very fact made

more aware of the distinctive requirements of the group he is serving.

The executive who asks himself, "How can other groups use my results and success?" is making his work more and more universally applicable. "How much of my project can be applied elsewhere?" is a challenging question for any administrator. It is also helpful to the educational community at large.

SPELL OUT YOUR GAINS SCORE: A gains score is another name for visible progress. It is the type of progress that implies the accomplishment of an observable and measurable goal. Very often a gains score is measured by breaking down an overall goal into a series of specific objectives. After yc accomplish objective number one, you are ready for objective number two, which in turn prepares you for objective number three and so on.

Projects that don't take advantage of a gains score tend to rely on human aptitude as a substitute for foresight. Aptitude is the ability to learn. As measured by the typical aptitude examination, aptitude refers to the ability to "learn rapidly in a new set of circumstances." Programs which rely heavily on aptitude rather than on careful planning are often poorly thought out. This lack of foresight is made up for by the exceptional aptitude or ability of the administrator. It's a good idea to have capable administrators. It's a better idea to have a program that allows for gains score. This gives the person of normal ability a better chance to contribute to overall success.

Programs with built-in gains scores are not limited to "cookbook" types in which the staff have nothing to do but take orders. Programs building on gains scores can have complexity built into them. In this way, they do not rely merely on speed of learning.

A gains score helps a person make visible progress. Let's take an example. A student comes into a carpentry shop. He can do nothing but cut wood rather crudely. This doesn't mean he is stupid. It means he has something to learn. Once he learns how to cut wood properly, he is taught how to fashion it, then how to sand it, how to polish it, and finally how to paint it. When he has mastered these techniques, he learns how to put it all together into a table, a bookshelf, or a cabinet. After he learns these operations, he goes on to making floors and ceilings. He's able to put it all together into a room as the next step. After he learns several different types of rooms, he learns how to build a house. After the house, he learns landscaping, gardening, and architecture. The next step is planning a neighborhood. After the neighborhood, he's able to build a city. With a number of cities put together, he's able to build a state, then a country, and finally the universe.

This idealized example is not meant to be taken literally in its final steps. Yet it does show how gains scores can help one grow from the simple to the complex. If you concentrate on gains scores, you will take a person where he is and help him develop to the limit of his ability. In such a context, no one is classified as stupid or incapable of at least some success, just because it takes him longer to learn.

Let's apply the gains score idea to your program. Try to recall your program on the first day of operation. List the items that needed to be done. Alongside each item that needed to be done, check off those ideas that have been accomplished. This will give you two things: (1) a sense of accomplishment and (2) a sense of direction.

Don't rest satisfied with your sense of accomplishment. Look at the list of things that still have to be done. This is where your program should

concentrate the next time around. After you spell out your [illegible] score, you can point to specific accomplishments. You know the [illegible] of accomplishments that must be achieved. Using your past track record as a basis for planning, try to pick out the appropriate next step."

If you give this approach to recycling a chance to help out you and your programs, you will be pleasantly surprised. You will find that research takes on a more practical disposition. You will find that evaluation is more of an everyday affair than a once a year dreaded experience. You will find that program development is built more upon "hard data" than upon "available" funds. You will find that fiscal accountability can strengthen your program in a number of specific measures all adding up to increased productivity. You will find that recycling a program means more than "doing the same thing over again for more money." When all this happens, you will using a systematic approach which doesn't require hyper-specialists for its success. It is to be hoped that such objectives are worth striving after no matter what may be the nature of your program. All this will make you a better executive.

Recycling is not the Same Thing as the Maintenance of the Status Quo

INTRODUCTION

The dictionary defines "status quo" as the existing state of affairs. Whenever recycling is understood to be the maintenance of the status quo, recycling is being falsely interpreted as "doing the same thing over again this year at a slightly higher price tag." The typical unabridged dictionary doesn't offer a very good definition of recycling. We are not referring to the environmental interpretation of recycling.

A better approach is the concept of recycling a project in such a way as to better achieve its main objectives. Sometimes, this means enlarging the perimeters of your project to include a number of parallel activities which could be easily merged under your umbrella. At other times it means allowing your project to be absorbed by larger and more organized projects that can do a better job in achieving the same objectives you set out to attain.

Let's now look at ways to extend the perimeters of your project, then we will distinguish between research dollars and program dollars.

HOW TO ENLARGE PERIMETERS OF YOUR CONCENTRIC CIRCLE: A new project can be compared to a concentric circle. In other words, your program has a definitely defined area of concentration and effort. This is the circle or target. The bull's eye of this target is your primary objective. There are always a number of different ways to attain a prespecified objective. Perhaps your project has chosen an effective method. Maybe, somebody else has found a method that works even better. Be ready for both situations.

Let's take an example to tie this in to the distinction between recycling and refunding. The difference between trying to recycle your project and refund it is

quite simple. When you try to refund your project, you primarily want more money to continue the existing state of affairs. When you try to recycle your project, you are asking for all of the assistance you can get to attain your goals more effectively. You have not limited your choice of alternatives to maintaining the status quo. You are ready to do whatever is necessary to make sure that your goals are attained. This could mean that somebody else is going to get the job and the money because of a better track record in attaining this particular objective.

THE COST OF RECYCLING: Anybody with a hidden agenda or some secret personal interest is going to find this a hard pill to take. Even the person with a completely open and disinterested approach will find it difficult to give up the uniqueness he has conferred upon his project. This is the high price of recycling. You can't always stick to your guns when somebody else has a better weapon with which to hit the target.

THE STEPS TO TAKE TO BE WORTH RECYCLING: If you want your project to be the best, you must make sure its perimeters are adequately large. How do you enlarge the perimeters of your project? The answer is very simple:

(1) Start talking to people who are doing similar work.

(2) Find out what they are doing.

(3) Examine the technology they employ.

(4) Look over their costs and compare their results with your own.

(5) Most likely you will find out that there are a number of specific things they are doing better than you are. Similarly, you are doing other items better than they are.

(6) The result of such a comparison should not include jealousies or petty grievances.

(7) The best things to do is start imitating with proper legal authorization what you have found to work with others.

(8) In return, give them the rights and permission to implement some of your discoveries in their project.

If both of you have developed a coding system to classify the results and objects of your project, you might find it a good idea to come up with a common coding system. You don't have to copycat their approach; you should have the ability to speak the same common language without the necessity for a room full of translators. Once you try to speak their language, they will try to speak yours. In this way, your project can benefit from the results of others.

DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN RESEARCH DOLLARS AND PROGRAM DOLLARS:

Research is another name for a through investigation. The "RE" of research stresses that you must keep searching over and over again until you find what you are looking for. In education, you are looking for valid technology that will work in practical applications. You're trying to come up with something new that can help out the educational scene. Research dollars are spent looking for things that might work, or at least promise to work.

The perspective is different when it comes to program dollars. Program dollars are spent to implement new ideas and new approaches that have been proven by research to work. When spending program dollars you are not looking for new ideas. You are looking for a new way to apply validated techniques that will produce adequate results at a lower cost.

Program dollars stress projects that can be implemented by almost anyone. The typical researcher is somebody with a highly specialized training. If your program requires a hyper-specialist to make it work, you're probably making the

the mistake of thinking in terms of a research program rather than a program that is ready for immediate application. Program development is a team effort. The pre-condition of its success is a team effort. Any program developed by research must be implemented at the local level.

The research dollars tries to get answers. The program dollars tries to implement the program that will be most acceptable to the people we are trying to serve. These are the people who must support our program. It shouldn't take more than 3 or 4 years to find out if the new ideas are capable of local application. If the new idea doesn't work, it's to be abandoned. The idea is not to try to check up on everyone or to accuse someone.

TWO DIFFERENT CONCEPTS: TRIAL STAGE VS. ADOPTION STAGE: The trial stage of any project is another example of research. It asks the question, "How viable is this innovation?" The innovator tries out these new ideas on a limited scale and with careful observation. In this way, he determines the usefulness of a proposed program for his school system. All this time, he is spending research dollars. Research dollars don't go on forever. There comes a time when they must fade away.

The adoption stage is the time when the research dollars stops. The proposed innovation is either fully installed into the operating system or it is abandoned. A commitment is made by the allocation of funds to continue the innovation as a regular part of the school program. When this is done, the changeover from research dollars to program dollars is complete.

RESEARCH GOES ON: When a project is abandoned after being funded by research for a number of years, it doesn't mean that the research team folds up. The research team goes on to new areas in its attempt to come up with ideas that can be implemented elsewhere.

ADDENDA

PRETESTS AND POSTTESTS

The following pretests and posttests have only one goal : they are intended to measure the direction of your attitude changes as a result of your exposure to the kind of evaluation system herein proposed. It would be a mistake to assume that these questions measure gains in subject matter and content. They are specifically designed to spell out your attitude and reaction to an evaluation system designed for non-experts. Such an approach assumes a number of things, chief of which is a certain frame of reference. This frame of reference is what we can call "attitude."

Careful readers of the question items will begin to notice a pattern and consistency which stresses two different approaches to evaluation. The difference between your pretest and your posttest will be more valid if you take the pretest before reading the document hereto attached and if you take the posttest after exposure to it. Taking the two sections immediately after each other will spell out your present attitude. Taking each section at different times will enable you to trace various attitudinal changes.

The short underlined section headings for each item will help you spell out the major attitude dimensions under investigation. These titles are meant for descriptive purposes only. There is no attempt to set up a complicated scale of personality vectors or of psychological dimensions.

PRETEST : SOME RESEARCH AND EVALUATION GOALS

1 - Timing -- When do you evaluate?

A - At the end of the program to be evaluated.

B - From the very first day of the program.

2 - Purpose -- Why do you evaluate?

A - To make a judgment of success or failure.

B - To stress problem awareness and problem solving from a practical viewpoint.

3 - Data -- What kind of data do you primarily use to evaluate?

A - Comparative performance data, e.g. pretest vs. posttest.

B - Daily operational reports on such things as goals accomplished, personnel involved, materials utilized, and cost-analysis.

4 - Decisions -- What kind of decision would you make if you found a particular project to be a complete failure?

A - Not refund it.

B - Try to find out "What's wrong?" and "What can be done about it?"

5 - Motivation -- What is the most obvious reason why people tend to rely heavily upon "daily" evaluation?

A - To check up on a project and to rate the administrators and staff thereof.

B - To gather feedback data essential to improve the daily operations of a program or project.

PRETEST : RESISTANCE TO EVALUATION

1 -- Educational Outcomes -- Which area do you find to be most heavily evaluated at the present?

A - Cognitive achievement : e.g. knowledge, information, memory, recall, understanding as measured by standardized tests.

B - Affective achievement : e.g. attitudes, values, human sensitivity, decrease in such things as ethnocentrism, adjustments, appreciations, and interests, all of which as measured by comparatively subjective and non-standardized criteria.

2 -- Cost Implications -- What would you do if you were confronted with an evaluation that said your approach and another program did not have "significantly different" results? We assume that you accept the validity of this evaluation study.

A - Nothing until I was convinced that the other approach produced "significantly better" results.

B - Seriously think of adopting this other approach if the cost factor were "significantly" less expensive.

3 -- Ethical Issues -- In your opinion, which is more important?

A - Confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity as innate rights of the population served by your program or project.

B - The need for open systems of communication, for individual evaluation in terms of growth and gains scores, and for the free exchange of information.

4 -- Priorities -- The main reason why people don't stress evaluation or achievement recordkeeping at the end of each day is?

A - Because time is in short supply and the available resources must be given to other tasks.

B - Because daily evaluation that has no effect on daily operations (e.g. the next day's activities) can be assigned to the category of "an expendable luxury."

PRETEST : CLARIFYING RESEARCH'S ROLE

1 -- Goals -- A research project or an evaluation can make little effective progress in working with significantly different groups until these groups reach agreement on :

A - General goals and overall purposes.

B - Specific objectives and practical decisions on what to do in cases of specific differences.

2 -- Expertise -- Who is more qualified to develop specific goals, reasonably measurable criteria, and valid evaluations of research?

A - An outside specialist, such as a university professor, a research specialist, an evaluation specialist, or a reputable consultant.

B - Someone who has an intensive awareness of the project or program, such as an administrator, a staff member, a participant, a recipient, or someone able to give it full time attention over a period of time.

3 -- Media -- In your opinion, what is the best way to get to know a program or a project intensively?

A - Careful examination of all the paperwork involved and considering nothing until it is "down on paper."

B - Face-to-face discussions and interactions with those concerned in the planning and implementation.

4 -- Forms -- To evaluate a project on a daily basis, what is most urgently needed according to your experience?

A - Data gathering forms that are simple and relevant.

B - Complete listings that make sure that no possible data sources are overlooked.

5 -- Product -- What has been the most typical results of evaluations you have seen most of the time?

A - Defensive reactions, anxiety, frustration, resentment, hostility, and griping.

B - Positive suggestions on how to improve a program before its termination and before all resources are consumed.

POSTTEST : Some Research and Evaluation Goals

1 - TIMING - When do you evaluate?

A - When enough money has been placed in the operational budget to cover this additional activity?

B - As soon as it is possible to ask, "How are we doing?"

2 - PURPOSE - Why do you evaluate?

A - To advance the discipline of evaluation (basic evaluation) and to decide whether or not the project or program should be recycled and refunded (applied evaluation).

B - To be able to do something about the always present and ever annoying operational difficulties before running out of time and money or both.

3 - DATA - What kind of data do you primarily use to evaluate?

A - As many as two or three hundred dimensions of both inputs (e.g. program resources) and demonstrated outputs (e.g. program results) that can be statistical analyzed by correlation and multiple regression.

B - A daily form specifying the participant's name, time spent in the project, resources consumed (staff and hardware), materials used, results (goals attained), and cost effectiveness (dollars to date per goal).

4 - DECISIONS - What happens when a particular learner spends all day in the program and achieves no measurable progress?

A - The person responsible is given a negative rating.

B - Tomorrow, a different approach will be tried; perhaps, different goals, alternative evaluation procedures, other appropriate learning resources, a change of pace new instructors, a switch to self-instructional device and a number of other possible adjustments in the syst

5 - MOTIVATION - Why does the program manager insist on daily progress reports on every participant? He obviously likes a lot of

A - Paperwork. B - Individualization.

POSTTEST : Resistance to Evaluation

1- EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES - How is the educational curriculum of your programs expressed for staff and participants?

A - Subject matter, courses, and content.

B - Performance objectives, behavioral objectives, criterion-referenced objectives.

2 - COST IMPLICATIONS - What would you do if you found a method of producing relevant results in line with your project goals.

A - Ask additional money for it in next year's budget.

B - Work it into this year's operations on a trial basis and as a substitute for something more expensive.

3 - ETHICAL ISSUES - In your opinion, which is more important?

A - Preparing the individual to meet the specifications of available job openings.

B - Influencing employers to adapt job openings to meet the personality needs of available manpower.

4 - PRIORITIES - Which of the following evaluations would be given higher priority by you?

A - An evaluation conducted at the end of the project which places program results in direct comparison with fifty other projects across the nation.

B - An evaluation conducted at the end of each day which tells you exactly what has been today, who did it, to whom it was done, goals attained by participants, and provides data from which costs to date can be easily estimated by simplified accounting procedures.

5 - FORMS - Which type of reporting format do you think can most easily turn people off in such a way as to effectively lose their cooperation?

A - A daily form which is simple to understand, to fill out, and to summarize for a program unit.

B - A yearly or quarterly form which is complete with almo every possible type of measurable dimension and is bas upon a computer-oriented coding system.

POSTTEST : Clarifying Democratic Roles

1 - GOALS - Planning sessions take a lot of time because :

A - Most conflicts of purposes and of values occur in the area of appropriate and acceptable terminology.

B - Value statements are often sufficiently vague to mask real conflicts until a specific application in a concrete and visible decision tests the commitment and cooperation ambiguously implied in verbal consent.

2 - EXPERTISE - Who would you hire to answer these questions for your program? "What do we want to do?" and "How will we know when we have succeeded in doing it?"

A - A university professor who is known for (a) the large number of evaluations he has previously conducted, (b) the large number of publications he has authored, (c) the large staff under his direction, and (d) his overriding emphasis on scholarship over all else.

B - A reputable non-specialist who tells you face-to-face that evaluation is an everyday function that shouldn't be clouded up by too much emphasis on (a) statistical treatment, (b) scholarly studies, (c) collection of data that won't be used for decisions, and (d) terminology not appropriate for the general public.

3 - MEDIA - Which evaluator has been most "efficient and economical" with your program money?

A - His daily reports were written on scrap paper. This was tabulated during summer vacation by vacationing math teachers for a total cost of $8,000.

B - His daily reports are written on mark-sensing cards. This is tabulated each day on a computer for a total cost of $13,500.

4 - PRODUCT - In your experiences, how have you found most people to react to the evaluations you have witnessed?

A - They interpret suggestions, recommendations, and ratings as blame and criticism.

B - They openly admit areas in need of correction and tend to work even harder to correct deficiencies.